

## Panel to Review Social Security Projections

Washington – The Social Security Advisory Board (SSAB) today announced the appointment of an expert panel to review the assumptions and methods used by the Social Security trustees in their annual report on the program’s financial status. “The nation relies on these projections for measuring the status of the nation’s most important social insurance program and for evaluating proposed reforms,” said Henry J. Aaron, chair of the SSAB. “It is vital that these projections embody the best possible data and methods.” This *Technical Panel on Assumptions and Methods* is the fifth the SSAB has commissioned since 1999.

To that end, the Panel, which consists of renowned economists, demographers, and actuaries, will meet over the next several months to analyze how economic and demographic trends will affect Social Security’s long-term solvency. The Panel will first meet on November 21, 2014 at the Social Security Advisory Board offices at 400 Virginia Ave S.W., Suite 625, Washington, DC. The Panel will issue a final report of its findings in the fall of 2015.

The *2015 Technical Panel on Assumptions and Methods* will be chaired by Alicia Munnell, currently the Peter F. Drucker Professor of Management Sciences at Boston College’s Carroll School of Management and Director of the Center for Retirement Research at Boston College. Professor Munnell is a former member of the President’s Council of Economic Advisers and vice-president and research director at the Boston Federal Reserve.

The other members of the panel include:

- Dr. Katharine Abraham – Professor in the Joint Program in Survey Methodology at the Maryland Population Research Center and formerly Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and member of the President’s Council of Economic Advisers.
- Dr. David Autor – Professor and Associate Department Head of the MIT Department of Economics, formerly editor of *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*.
- Dr. Jeffrey Brown – William G. Karnes Professor of Finance and Director of the Center for Business and Public Policy at the University of Illinois and formerly member of the Social Security Advisory Board.
- Dr. Peter Diamond – Institute Professor (emeritus), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, recipient of the Economic Sciences prize in memory of Alfred Nobel, and formerly president of the American Economic Association.
- Dr. Claudia Goldin – Henry Lee Professor of Economics at Harvard University, Director of the National Bureau of Economic Research’s Development of the American Economy program, formerly president of the American Economic Association and the Economic History Association.
- Sam Gutterman – Retired as Director and Consulting Actuary at PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, and formerly president of the Society of Actuaries.

**Chair**

Henry Aaron

**Members**

Lanhee Chen

Alan Cohen

Barbara Kennelly

Bernadette  
Franks-Ongoy

Jagadeesh  
Gokhale

Dorcas Hardy

**Director**

Claire Green

- Dr. Ronald Rindfuss – Research Professor of Sociology and Carolina Population Center Fellow at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, formerly president of the Population Association of America.
- Michael Teitelbaum – Senior Research Associate in the Harvard Law School Labor and Worklife Program, formerly Vice President of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, and formerly vice-chair and acting chair of the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform.
- Joe Silvestri – Retirement Research Actuary at the Society of Actuaries.

Like its predecessors, the 2015 panel will help to assure the American public that the work of the trustees and actuaries has been examined by recognized experts and embodies the highest professional standards.

For updates on the 2015 panel and other Board activity, follow the Board on Twitter: @ssabgov.

Congress charged the Social Security Advisory Board with advising the President, the Congress, and the Commissioner of Social Security on matters relating to the nation's retirement and disability systems. Its mandates also include increasing public understanding of the Social Security system. Members of the Board are appointed on a bipartisan basis by the President, the Senate, and the House of Representatives.

### **Charter**

The Panel of expert actuaries, economists and demographers appointed by the Social Security Advisory Board is charged with providing technical assistance to the Board by reviewing the assumptions specified by the Board of Trustees of the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Disability Insurance Trust Fund and the methods used by the Social Security actuaries to project the future financial status of the programs. The Panel shall deliver a written report to the Advisory Board by September 2015.

Specifically the Panel is asked to:

- Review the key economic and demographic assumptions.
- Review and assess current projection methodologies.
- Review ways to improve the presentation of key concepts in the Trustees report so as to make them more accessible and informative to the public.
- Review in particular:
  - The impact of the enactment of the Affordable Care Act on factors affecting OASDI financing such as labor force participation, retirement and disability claiming, and the earnings to compensation ratio.
  - Recent developments in labor force growth, participation rates, labor productivity, and dispersion in earnings.
  - The implications of trends in family formation on benefit projections and labor force trends.
- Review and assess the status of the recommendations of previous Technical Panels appointed by the Advisory Board.

## **Meeting Schedule**

| <u>Date</u>                      | <u>Location</u> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| November 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2014 | Washington, DC  |
| December 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2014 | Washington, DC  |
| January 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2015  | Boston, MA      |
| February 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2015 | Washington, DC  |
| March 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2015    | Washington, DC  |
| April 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2015    | Boston, MA      |
| May 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2015       | Washington, DC  |
| June 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2015     | Washington, DC  |

- All meetings dates are on Friday
- Meetings in Washington DC will be held at the offices of the Social Security Advisory Board: 400 Virginia Ave SW, Suite 625, Washington DC 20024.
- The location of the meetings in Boston is to be determined.

Contact:  
Social Security Advisory Board  
202-475-7700

400 Virginia Avenue, SW \* Suite 625 \* Washington, DC \* 20024  
Tel: (202) 475-7700 \* Fax: (202) 475-7715 \* [www.ssab.gov](http://www.ssab.gov)